

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: OCTOBER 21, 2015

TO: MEMBERS OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

FROM: T&ES STAFF

SUBJECT: AGENDA ITEM # 2 – ITEMS FOR CONSENT

ISSUE: Staff update to Transportation Commission on various ongoing projects.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Commission receive the items for consent.

A. FUNDING UPDATE

Washington Area Metropolitan Transit Authority (WMATA) – WMATA reviewed ridership and revenue projections as inputs to the FY 2017 proposed budget. While WMATA is scheduled to implement some type of fare increase in FY 2017, the following factors will make raising revenues problematic:

- WMATA rail ridership has been dropping annually since 2010
- Bus ridership is showing limited growth
- MetroAccess ridership is starting to grow again
- Low inflation
- Competition with other modes, including telework.
- Lower federal transit benefit
- Challenges in providing consistent levels of service

WMATA and the jurisdictions have been working on a new Comprehensive Funding Agreement (CFA). The new agreement will replace the old CFA due to expire June 30, 2016. Capital needs of WMATA, including those identified by the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) and the Federal Transit Administration, will need to be reviewed to develop the agreement.

Virginia House Bill Two (HB2) – The Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) adopted a statewide process for HB2 funds during their June 17, 2015 meeting. These are discretionary funds that the CTB will allocate to projects that are capacity enhancing within the Commonwealth’s Six Year Improvement Program (SYIP).

The City submitted the following projects for funding under HB2 before the deadline of September 30, 2015.

- Broadband Link for West Eisenhower \$1,000,000
- DASH (Alexandria Transit Company) Transit Technology \$1,829,000
- Old Cameron Run \$6,000,000
- Traffic Adaptive Signal Control \$7,000,000

Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) – In order to determine the transportation needs of the Commonwealth, the CTB—through the Virginia Office of Intermodal Planning and Investment—is developing VTrans 2040, the Commonwealth’s long-range multimodal transportation plan. The plan will be developed in two phases and will result in the production of two companion documents: the VTrans2040 Vision and the VTrans2040 Multimodal Transportation Plan. The first phase was released as a draft in April 2015 and is expected to be completed by the end of this calendar year and the second phase is expected to be completed in calendar year 2016.

B. POTOMAC YARD METORAIL STATION EIS

On September 29, 2015, City Council approved the restructuring of the Potomac Yard Metrorail Implementation Work Group (PYMIG), adding three community members, a business community representative, and a representative from the Parks and Recreation Commission. The next PYMIG meeting will be on October 28 at Charles Houston Recreation Center. This meeting will be the first of a series of meetings focusing on conceptual design of the station.

WMATA anticipates releasing the Request for Proposals for the design-build contract next summer. The project activities over the next year will focus not only on completing the environmental process, but also on developing a conceptual design for the station to include in the design-build documents. The design process will include a series of meetings to solicit public input, as well as regular updates to the Transportation Commission, Planning Commission, the Parks and Recreation Commission, the Board of Architectural Review, and City Council. The public process will be supported by a design team consisting of consultants and City staff, WMATA, and the National Park Service (NPS).

City and WMATA staff are continuing to work on the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) document, as well as related processes required for effects to cultural resources and wetlands. It is anticipated that the FEIS will be circulated publicly in the winter, with a Record of Decision closing out the process in the second quarter of 2016. Staff has completed the first of a series of quarterly newsletters for Potomac Yard Metrorail Station. The newsletter will be distributed to households and businesses east

of Mount Vernon Ave and north of Slaters Lane /Monroe Ave.

Background: The Potomac Yard Metrorail Station project is an infill Metrorail station located between the National Airport and Braddock Road Metrorail stations on the Blue and Yellow lines in the vicinity of the Potomac Yard Development.

For more information on the project, please visit www.alexandriava.gov/potomacyard.

C. ARLINGTON TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Arlington is in the process of updating their Transit Development Plan (TDP). Since the City now operates services into Arlington at Shirlington and the Pentagon, and may operate additional service in the future, Arlington has requested that the City be one of their partners in developing the plan. The City will share its own recently completed TDP and be available for discussions with Arlington.

Background: All transit agencies in Virginia that receive Commonwealth funds are required by the Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) to submit a Transit Development Plan, which details all plans for transit in the community. Alexandria provided its draft plan for review by the Transportation Commission in the Summer of 2015.

D. KING STREET METRORAIL STATION

After the Development Special Use Permit (DSUP) was extended, staff began negotiations with WMATA and the design consultant to resume the final design work for the project. It should resume shortly, and should be finished in early 2016. Staff will continue to reach out to adjoining stakeholders to inform them of the project's progress.

Background: The King Street Metrorail station is Alexandria's largest transit facility, and requires significant updates, expansions, and safety improvements. The City began addressing these needs by requesting WMATA conduct a feasibility study for rebuilding the access facilities at the lot in 2006. The result of this study was released in March, 2008. Through an extensive vetting process with the general public and stakeholders, the City developed a design for the station that improves non-motorized access, bus access, shuttle and taxi access, short term rental car access, and aesthetics. In 2012, the design was endorsed by the Transportation Commission, the City Council, and the Planning Commission. After approval, the design was refined, and the City determined that some of the features of the facility needed to meet City standards rather than WMATA standards. A long discussion between WMATA and the City resulted in a decision that allowed the facility to be designed using City standards. WMATA gave the City a permanent easement to construct a transit facility, if the City maintained the facility in perpetuity. After this agreement, a more detailed design was produced for the facility, and the cost was higher than budgeted. The improvement was placed in the FY2016 CIP budget process, and eventually acquired sufficient funding to be constructed.

E. EISENHOWER AVENUE METRORAIL STATION

In order to construct this project, a three-party memorandum of understanding (MOU) needs to be signed by WMATA, the City, and the adjoining private developer. After the MOU has been signed, the City's Department of Project Implementation (DPI) will review the document to make sure that a revised design contract will include all items in the MOU. The revised contract will then be released, and the City will begin design

on the project in early 2016.

Background: The Eisenhower Avenue Metrorail Station project will use Federal Transit Authority (FTA) and Commonwealth funds to reconstruct the Eisenhower Metrorail station entrance to include improved amenities for transit patrons such as better weather protection and a prominent plaza. This improvement is necessary to accommodate all of the high-intensity growth adjacent and/or in close proximity to the station.

F. EISENHOWER AVENUE WIDENING

The City received Right-of-Way (ROW) authorization from the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) on September 16th, 2015. Staff anticipates awarding the contract for ROW acquisition services in October 2015, after which the ROW acquisition process will be initiated. Final plan preparation will continue, but plans cannot be finalized until after completion of the ROW acquisition process. Construction is estimated to begin in spring of 2017 and is estimated to take 18 months.

Background: This project creates a multi-modal environment and enhances safety for pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists. The at-grade improvements consist of dual left turns at the Eisenhower/Mill Road intersection on westbound Eisenhower Avenue, upgrading the receiving lanes on Mill Road to accept the dual left turns from Eisenhower Avenue, converting the traffic circle at Eisenhower and Holland to a "T" intersection from John Carlyle Street to Holland Lane, upgrading the street lighting and sidewalks in front of the Simpson property, and full width resurfacing of Eisenhower Avenue between Holland Lane and Mill Road.

G. KING STREET / BEAUREGARD INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENT

In order to facilitate the utility relocation and avoid delays to the contractor during an on-going contract, a two-phase approach was developed. This approach allows a portion of the road improvements to be constructed in order to facilitate the utility relocations prior to construction of the major project elements. Bid packages for Phase I of the project were approved by VDOT. Phase I was advertised for construction on September 21, 2015. The bid opening for Phase I construction is scheduled for October 21. If an acceptable responsive bid is received, a contract will be awarded for Phase I of the project.

Phase I construction is anticipated to begin in spring 2016 and is estimated to be completed in fall 2016. Utility relocation is expected to take 10 -12 months, with completion anticipated in summer 2017. Phase II construction is anticipated to begin in summer 2017 and is estimated to be completed in late 2018.

Background: This project creates a multi-modal environment, enhances safety for pedestrians and motorists, and provides for traffic flow improvements at the King Street and North Beauregard Street intersection. Improvements include additional left turn lanes in each direction on King Street, medians, and a 10' shared use path on portions of King Street. The improvements will increase capacity and safety through the corridor. Once completed, this project will provide a safer intersection with transportation infrastructure for bicyclists and pedestrians, supporting the City's Complete Streets Policy. Completion of this project will also help mitigate some of the BRAC-133 impacts.

H. WEST END TRANSITWAY

The Project Team's ongoing activities include:

- Continuing work to develop the Environmental Documentation – the class of action is now a Documented Categorical Exclusion (CE) based on a review of current findings and coordination with FTA
- Refining capital and operating costs
- Finalizing conceptual engineering documents
- Providing project updates to City Council and various City Commissions (see table below)
- Public outreach and coordination with stakeholders

Upcoming Meetings & Briefings	Date
Environmental Policy Commission	September 28, 2015
Planning Commission	October 6, 2015
City Council Update (Update Only, No Action)	October 13, 2015
Parks & Recreation Commission (Memo Update)	October 15, 2015
Alexandria Transit Company / DASH Board	November 11, 2015
Budget & Fiscal Affairs Advisory Committee	November 17, 2015
Policy Advisory Group (PAG) Meeting #6	December 3, 2015

Technical work for the West End Transitway will be completed by fall 2015. The project schedule anticipates endorsement by the Policy Advisory Group and City Commissions in winter 2015/2016 and project re-concurrence by City Council in spring 2016. The current project schedule is included in Attachment 1.

Background: In December 2013, the City kicked off an Alternatives Analysis / Environmental Assessment (AA/EA) for the West End Transitway (also referred to as Corridor C) as part of the Federal NEPA Process. The AA/EA will analyze and refine the alignment as defined by the CWG and City Council and to identify any impacts and potential mitigation associated with the recommended alternative. The study is partially funded by a grant from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and is the first step towards applying for a federal Small Starts grant for project design and construction. For more information on the West End Transitway, please visit: <http://www.alexandriava.gov/westendtransitway>

I. VIRGINIA RAILWAY EXPRESS (VRE) PEDESTRIAN TUNNEL

The VRE pedestrian tunnel is in the process of beginning to solicit the opinions of stakeholders. On October 7, 2015 VRE will present the project at the Alexandria Board of Architectural Review. On October 13, 2015, VRE will present before the Upper King Street Neighborhood Association with more community input sessions to follow. VRE is hoping to receive 60% plans before the end of the calendar year.

Background: The VRE has received money from VDOT and from Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA) to build an accessible passageway between Alexandria Union Station and the King St-Old Town Metrorail station. There is currently a tunnel for part of the distance, but it is inaccessible to people with disabilities. VRE has reviewed

various options and has decided that building a new accessible tunnel in close proximity to the current one will provide an accessible passageway, and will allow people with disabilities to access all platforms at the station through the use of elevators. VRE has completed a 30% design of the project, and is receiving comments about it.

J. ENVISION ROUTE 7

The next step for Northern Virginia Transportation Commission (NVTC) and its consultants is to give the general public the opportunity to see the results of the Alternative Analysis. This will be done at three meetings in the region, with the first in Alexandria. The meetings and locations are the following:

- **November 7, 7-9 PM Alexandria Health Department Building, 4480 King Street, 5th Floor Conference Room, Alexandria, VA 22302**
- **November 10, 7-9 PM Mary Ellen Henderson Middle School Cafeteria, 7130 Leesburg Pike Falls Church, VA 22043**
- **November 18, 7-9 PM Glen Forest Elementary School Cafeteria. 5829 Glen Forest Sr., Falls Church, VA 22041**

Background: The Northern Virginia Transportation Commission (NVTC) received some funds from the Federal Transit Administration to do an Alternative Analysis of high-capacity transit in the Route 7 corridor from Tysons Corner to Alexandria. The project was split into two phases. First, a consultant ran a preliminary feasibility analysis of the need for such a service, as well as analyzed possible origins, destinations, and modes of travel. After completion, NVTC received 70% funds from the NVTA to finish its study and develop a set of recommendations. The consultant has been working on demand forecasts and cost projections for several alternatives.

For more information on the Envision Route 7 visit the project's website:
EnvisionRoute7.com

ATTACHMENTS:

West End Transitway Project Schedule